THE FIRST IN THE ARCHIVES:
ZELIA NUTTALL AND MEXICAN MANUSCRIPTS

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the amateur scholar and archaeologist Zelia Nuttall was not only digging in Mexican archaeological fields for artifacts but also digging through European and Mexican archives for manuscripts. Nuttall characterized her motivation for seeking out indigenous writings in these archives as altruistic, and she often asserted that this work was carried out purely in the interest of science. Not content to simply uncover these neglected manuscripts, however, she also sought to share the materials through publications. Nuttall was involved in the publication of the *Codex Nuttall* (previously known as the *Zouche Codex*), the *Codex Magliabechiano III*, and several primary sources related to Sir Francis Drake. She also attempted to publish the manuscript now known as the *Florentine Codex*, but she was never able to achieve this. This essay will explore Nuttall's archival research, which led her to publish, or attempt to publish, the materials that she found in archives and to thereby make them more widely accessible. Despite a few great successes, such as the publication of the *Codex Nuttall*, Nuttall was often frustrated by a lack of money for printing, competition from other scholars, and the process of working with the Peabody Museum to print facsimiles. Nuttall's position as a woman scholar and an amateur left her without institutional support in an era when such associations became increasingly important.

Dedicated to David Dressing and Bridget Gazzo.

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“With many cordial regards to you and yours and heartfelt fond wishes to you and congratulations that we are now making the first formal step towards the realizations of our hopes and plans for the advancement of science here [in Mexico].”

-Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 27 September 1909

PART I: INTRODUCTION

The Mexican-American archaeologist, anthropologist, and amateur scholar Zelia Nuttall was instrumental in the publication of pre-Columbian and colonial codices between 1880 and 1933. Nuttall also assisted in the founding of the University of California and collected items for their anthropology museum, including codices. Nuttall's engagement in international debates with scholars in the International Congress of Americanists encouraged her peers to set standards for anthropological practices and highlighted the lack of archival standards in Mexico and Europe in the early twentieth century. What challenges did Zelia Nuttall face in finding, collecting, interpreting, and publishing Mexican manuscripts at the turn of the nineteenth century? My research, relying heavily on Nuttall's correspondence, will show that she faced competition from other scholars interested in publishing the same materials in addition to financial challenges and frustrations with her main publisher; these challenges were exacerbated by her status as a female scholar whose relationship to academic and scholarly institutions was often ambiguous.

One focus of this essay will be on how Nuttall's career crucially depended upon her ability to negotiate a complex, ambiguous, and shifting relationship with scholarly institutions. For the majority of her career, Nuttall was not employed by any university or museum in an official capacity, but she did enjoy a supportive, if ill-defined, relationship with the Peabody Museum, which allowed her entry into a world of scholarship that would normally have been inaccessible to an amateur, particularly a woman. As a researcher with a college degree but no academic experience or training other than that acquired through her own scholarship, Nuttall found this relationship especially beneficial, and she was able to maintain and nurture it for several decades. However, as the field of archaeology professionalized, holding an advanced degree gained in importance, and the Peabody eventually began to provide less funding and less support for Nuttall.

The second and third sections of this essay, "Background and education" and "Zelia Nuttall at work," explore Nuttall's growing interest in working with Mexican

manuscripts, her archival research, and her publication efforts. This archival work is distinct from her fieldwork as an archaeologist excavating in Mexico and her curatorial work classifying artifacts within the context of a museum, and it called for particular skills and posed particular challenges. In pursuing her research, Nuttall traveled to archives in Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom to track down elusive codices; subjected those manuscripts to close scholarly analysis; and engaged in protracted negotiations in her attempts to publish both reproductions of those codices and her scholarly work on them.

The fourth section explores how this intensive work with manuscripts fits into Nuttall's overall anthropological projects. Nuttall was one of the first to understand these codices as equal in significance to archaeological artifacts. In addition to publishing facsimiles of these documents to make them more widely accessible to scholars, she attempted to collect codices and other manuscripts for preservation and display in museums. While seeking funding for her archeological excavations, Nuttall also reached out to benefactors such as Frederick Ward Putnum, Charles Bowditch, and Phoebe Hearst in an effort to acquire funding for the purchase of codices and to underwrite the publication of facsimiles of those codices. For Nuttall, archaeological and archival work went hand in hand.

Furthermore, Nuttall assisted in establishing a scholarship for the emerging Mexican scholar Manual Gamio, helping to arrange it so that he could study at Columbia University with Franz Boas. Gamio would eventually take the place of Nuttall's greatest foe, Leopoldo Batres, as the head of the national anthropology department, which would dramatically change the way that archaeology was conducted in Mexico.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Surprisingly, very little biographical work has been published on Zelia Nuttall's activities as an archival scholar or on her work as an archaeologist. A dissertation by Carmen Ruiz, a chapter by Amanda Adams, and a book by Apen Ruiz Martínez all examine the

role that gender played in challenging Nuttall throughout her career.[1] In particular, Ruiz looked at the gender dynamic between Zelia Nuttall and Leopoldo Batres, her frequent adversary. "Instead of focusing on the particularities of two characters, I have imagined the role gender played in the conformation of archaeology as a public science, as a science for the nation. In this sense, by confronting Leopoldo Batres, the director of Mexican national antiquities, Nuttall was transgressing her proper space as a woman."[2] I have written about Nuttall's work as an anthropologist locked in conflict with other scholars. I focused on the way in which the disagreements between Nuttall and others, particularly her conflicts with Leopoldo Batres and the Prussian scholar Edward Seler, led to the development of methodological standards in archaeology.[3] However, no one has yet published on her work as an archival researcher and manuscript collector. In the late twentieth century, Ross Parmenter, a noted music critic, became deeply enamored of Nuttall and her family and wrote a 1500 page biography of Nuttall. However, perhaps as a result of his tendency to recount every aspect of Nuttall's life in excruciating detail, Parmenter was unable to acquire a publisher for his unfocused and lengthy manuscript. One of the valuable sections in Parmenter's manuscript, however, is his description of Nuttall's intellectual rivalry with Eduard Seler and Joseph duc de Loubat over numerous significant pre-Columbian and colonial manuscripts, such as the *Florentine Codex*.[4]

A treatment of Nuttall's work is needed to fill in a gap in the literature regarding the use of archives, manuscript collecting, and anthropology. Furthermore, an examination of Nuttall's position as a Mexican-American woman in a field dominated by international

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[1] Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology, 1890-1930." Ph.D. book (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 2003); Amanda Adams, "Mexico's Archaeological Queen: Zelia Nuttall 1857-1933," in *Ladies of the Field: Early Women Archaeologists and Their Search for Adventure,* edited by Amanda Adams. (Berkeley: Greystone Book, 2010); Apen Ruiz Martínez, *Género, Ciencia y Política: Voces, vidas y miradas de la arquelogía mexicana*. (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2016.)

[2] Ruiz, 314.

[3] Seonaid Valiant, *Ornamental Nationalism: Archaeology and Antiquities in Mexico, 1876-1911.* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

[4] Ross Parmenter, "Zelia Nuttall and the Recovery of Mexico's Past, Volume 1–3," in the Ross Parmenter Papers, unpublished MSS, Latin American Library at Tulane," undated. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 10 Jan 1904. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University. Eduard Seler was Zelia Nuttall's greatest academic rival. Engaged in life-long debates, she eagerly awaited his responses to her printed criticism of his work. In 1904, she wrote to Fredric Ward Putnam that she believed her remarks were severe but accurate and had relegated all of her "crushing" comments about Seler to her footnotes, where she had worded them "prudently."

scholars and government officials who were almost exclusively male will help us to better understand the role of gender in the formation of the social sciences.

RESOURCES

The American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Peabody Museum at Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts, each hold correspondence between Zelia Nuttall and various academics, most notably Franz Boas and Fredric Ward Putnum, respectively.[5] The nineteen letters between Boas and Nuttall reveal deliberate efforts to build anthropology programs for the United States and Mexico. The five boxes of materials held at the Peabody Museum archive hold correspondence, notes, and unidentified illustrations for Nuttall's publications (see Figures 10 and 13). This correspondence reveals Nuttall's exhaustive efforts to encourage the Peabody Museum to publish facsimiles and her work on the Aztec Calendar Stone.

Ross Parmenter's biography of Zelia Nuttall, although unpublished, served as an important source for this thesis. In addition, Parmenter's research notes illuminate Nuttall's relationships with other scholars. Parmenter's work is housed at the Latin American Library at Tulane University.

[5] There are nineteen letters between Nuttall and Boas at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia and three Holinger Boxes of correspondence between Nuttall and Peabody Museum staff in Boston. https://search.amphilsoc.org/collections/view?docId=ead/Mss.B.B61-ead.xml;query=;brand=default; Sarah R. Demb, "Zelia M. M. Nuttall, (1857-1933), 1896-1912, "A Penitential Rite of the Ancient Mexicans," *Peabody Museum Papers Series*, 1904. http://peabody2.ad.fas.harvard.edu/archives /Nuttall.html#anchorBio. Accessed 3 March 2014.

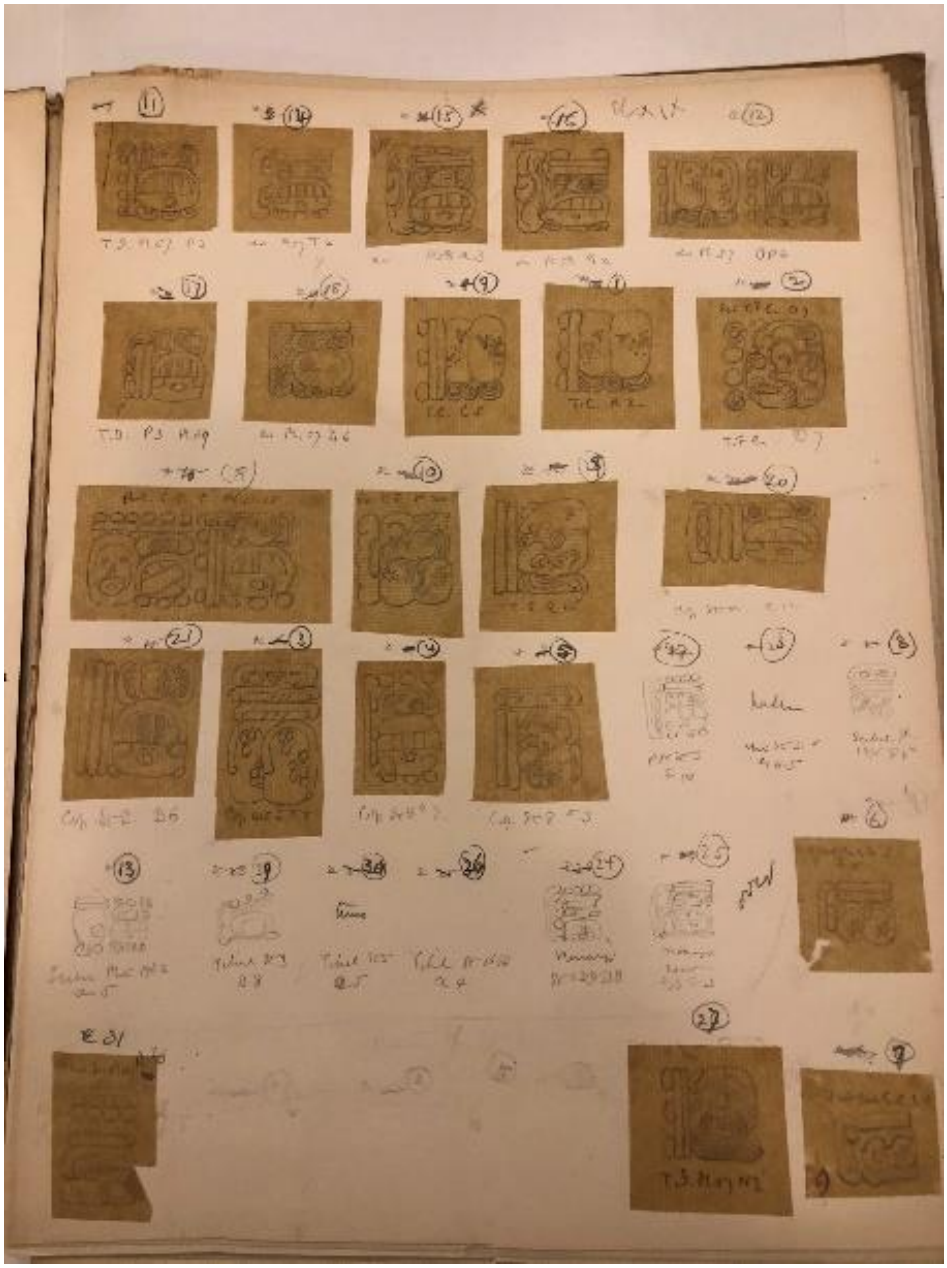

Figure 1: Illustrations for Zelia Nuttall's paper on the Aztec Calendar Stone.
Courtesy Peabody Museum Archive.

PART II: BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION

This section of this essay will explain how Zelia Nuttall acquired the education and cosmopolitan experience that would prepare her for her future career in Mexican studies. This profession generally required the knowledge of multiple languages and an elite education and social skills. Brilliant and precocious, Nuttall mastered those skills—including fluency in numerous languages—by the time she was twenty.

BIOGRAPHY

Zelia María Magadalena Nuttall (1857-1933) was an amateur scholar who traveled the world in search of pre-Columbian books from Mexico to study, to acquire, and to publish as facsimiles. Born in San Francisco in 1857 to Robert Kennedy Nuttall, a medical doctor and an Irish immigrant, and Magdalena Parrott—who had been born in Mexico and raised in San Francisco by her Mexican mother and her banker father, John Parrott—Nuttall's curiosity about ancient Mexican books developed in childhood. Her mother gave her a full nine-volume set of Lord Kingsborough's lovely reproductions of Mexican artifacts and codices, *Antiquities of Mexico,* for her eighth birthday.[6]

[6] Alfred M. Tozzer, "Zelia Nuttall (obituary)," *American Anthropologist,* Volume 35, (1933): 475-481. A volume of this printing would be an elephant-sized folio that would be impossible to hold and very expensive. Most volumes were obtained by subscription. Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971), chapter 11.

Figure 2: Zelia Nuttall in her late twenties, around the time she divorced.
Source: Archeoplanet.

EDUCATION

During Nuttall's early adolescence, her family traveled to Europe, and in that time, young Nuttall gained an education in seven languages and a grounding in history as the family moved between France, Germany, Italy, and England. She rounded out her undergraduate schooling at Bedford College in London, England.[7]

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Since childhood, inspired by her mother's Mexican heritage, Nuttall had maintained an interest in early Mexican history. When she chose to marry, it was to a man who collected artifacts and books from indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest and Mexico. In 1880, Nuttall wed Alphonse Louis Pinart, a French linguist. Pinart had built his reputation by collecting Aleutian masks in Alaska and Aztec sculptures in Mexico,

[7] Adams, 69.

which he then sold to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in France (see Figures 3 and 4).[8]

Figure 3*:* Yupik mask collected by Alphonse Pinart in the 1870s.
In the permanent collection of the Musée du quai Branly (formerly the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro).
Photograph by the author, 2018.

Pinart spent almost the entirety of his and his wife's combined inheritances on manuscripts, books, and artifacts, and this was surely a contributing factor when Nuttall chose to leave him permanently in 1882.[9] Pregnant at the time, Nuttall wrote to Pinart, then stationed in Panama, and told him that there was no need for him to return to San Francisco (see Figure 2). Their only child, Nadine, was born in 1882, and she would

[8] Sven D. Haakanson, Jr., Sven D Haakanson, Amy F Steffian, Giinaquq *like a Face: Sugpiaq Masks of the Kodiak Archipelego*. (Château-Musée de Boulogne-sur-Mer: Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, 2009), 31-41. The masks collected by Pinart are currently on display at the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac in Paris (last visited December 2018).

[9] Ross Parmenter, *Explorer, Linguist and Ethnologist: A Descriptive Bibliography of the Published Works of Alphonse Louis Pinart with Notes on His Life* (Los Angeles: Southwest Museum, 1966), 2.

prove to be a lifelong comfort for her mother. Due to Pinart's stubborn resistance and the complex regulations about divorce in France, it was six years before Nuttall won a divorce and the full custody of her child in 1888.

In early March 1888, Nuttall wrote to Frederick Ward Putnum that the delay in her divorce proceeding was depressing her spirits and productivity. "A delay of some weeks in the preparation of my paper was caused by my being depressed in spirits and health by all sorts of matters of a painful nature connected with my unfortunate marriage. It has been ascertained that, according to the French law, the deed of separation drawn up in California is absolutely null and void. Nor does there seem to be the slightest possibility of procuring protection for me and my child. There are all sorts of complications, and I tell you of them as a friend who I would keep 'au courant' of what concerns me."[10] Nuttall also told Putnum that she would have to miss important conferences, as she must return to California and would not be allowed to leave the state until the proceedings were completed, or else the divorce might fail. She promised to swing by Boston on her way home and to tell Putnum all the details in person. "[My] intended visit to California is to be kept a profound secret. It is best that my visit to Boston be not known by more than my personal friends."[11] Although Nuttall did not mention her husband, Pinart, by name, it is clear that she feared that he would hear of her plans.

[10] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 4 March 1888. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[11] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 22 April 1888. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

Figure 4: Statue of Ehecatl, Aztec God of the Wind, collected by Alphonse Pinart in the 1880s. In the permanent collection at the Musée du quai Branly (formerly the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro). Photograph by the author, 2018.

In June, Nuttall traveled from Dresden to Boston and then on to San Francisco. After leaving Boston, she updated Putnum on Pinart's efforts to halt the divorce. She wrote, "I can see nothing clearly in my personal affairs, my lawyer is investigating certain doubtful points. The last news from Paris is that Mr. P. has executed his threat of depositing a complaint against me in Paris! —We are wondering what for?"[12] Feeling wronged by the Pinart family, Nuttall expressed her personal thanks to Putnum for his support of both her and her career. "Many thanks for your kind notes which assure me of your true friendship and interest and sympathy. I trust that all will be well in a short time. I am secure and at rest in the strong protection of kind relatives."

[12] Letters from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 23 May 1888; 6 June 1888. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

It was at this point that Nuttall stopped signing her correspondence as Zelia Nuttall Pinart and reverted to her birth name, Zelia Nuttall.[13] To cement this identity, Nuttall also sued for the right to return to her maiden name, and she then began insisting that people refer to her as Mrs. Nuttall, a title that would show that she was a respectable woman. The oddity of the self-determined title confused many people, and Nuttall often had to correct proofs that identified the author as "Miss Nuttall" instead of "Mrs. Nuttall."[14] Her daughter, too, was given the last name Nuttall and was known commonly as Nadine Nuttall.[15] Zelia Nuttall's insistence on using this title is a keen demonstration of what her adversaries would characterize as her stubbornness, but it can also be seen as an indication of her uncompromising commitment to defining herself on her own terms, thus defying cultural expectations.

TRAVEL

Nuttall's scholarship began in earnest after she separated from her husband. In 1884, she moved to Dresden, and then she began to travel around the world. In 1886, she traveled to Mexico with several family members and spent six months at the National Museum studying Aztec artifacts. Until Nuttall purchased a house in Mexico, in 1902, she was without a permanent home of her own, and she relied on friends, relatives, hotels, and flats and houses rented for short periods to house herself, her daughter, and, occasionally, her mother Magadalena. Despite her complaints about the exhaustion and various illnesses caused by the stress of her homelessness, Nuttall continued to work productively throughout this eight-year period. Indeed, it was the lack of a permanent home that gave her the freedom to travel to Mexico, Spain, Italy, Sweden, the United States, and Germany in search of codices.

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[13] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 23 May 1888. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[14] Letters from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 10 January 1901; 20 April 1901. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[15] Letter to Frederick Ward Putnum from Zelia Nuttall, Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University, Zelia Nuttall papers, 1886-1912, correspondence, box 2 or 2, 605-4:5:2, Acc#2004.1.720.

By 1886, Nuttall was an amateur representative of the Peabody Museum with the title "Honorary Assistant in Mexican Archaeology," and she sent reports and artifacts back to the head of the museum, Frederick Ward Putnam, regarding the history of indigenous peoples, particularly the history of the Aztecs.

A HOME IN MEXICO

In 1902, Nuttall moved to Mexico, to the historic neighborhood of Coyoacán, and adopted Casa Alvarado—which she believed had been built by the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1521—as her home base. The house and property actually form a compound with multiple acres and include an orchard that she planted (see Figure 5). This home was where Nuttall cultivated a garden of botanicals historically important to the Mexica, known as the Aztecs. Ever the hostess, Nuttall also held high teas, international cocktail soirees, dinner parties, and solstice demonstrations there. The young archaeologist Sylvanus Morely described his first visit to Zelia Nuttall's library, recounting how "Madam Nuttall soon appeared and proved to be the most charming hostess. She led the way to her study where it was more cozy."[16] All of Nuttall's furnishings were custom-made and were either decorated with motifs from the ruins, as was the case with her couch, or were shaped like pyramids, as was the case with her desk and bookcases. The English writer D. H. Lawrence visited Nuttall in her home and based his boisterous character "Mrs. Norris," in *The Plumed Serpent,* upon Nuttall.[17] Nuttall used this location to strategic advantage in the battles she waged over her scholarly work on indigenous studies in Mexico.

[16] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 735. Description from a letter by Morely.

[17] Ross Parmenter, *Lawrence in Oaxaca: A Quest for the Novelist in Mexico* (Salt Lake City: G.M. Smith/Peregrine Smith Books, 1984).

Figure 5: Zelia Nuttall's home in modern day Coyoacán, Mexico City.
Photograph by the author, 2018.

Even before she inhabited it, Zelia Nuttall believed that her home was special because of Alvarado, its former owner, and the rose gardens that she believed that he had planted nearly 400 years earlier. She also eventually realized that a house in the tropics, like hers, would experience two days in the year on which there would be no shadows cast at noon and, by 1907, she was staging a solstice entertainment for her friends centered around this phenomenon.[18]

Writing to Frederic Ward Putnum in 1900, Nuttall expressed that she wanted to live in Mexico so that she could enjoy the climate and have a garden where she could enjoy the good air and the spaciousness. She argued that it would be more economical to purchase

[18] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 736.

a house in Mexico than to rent a house in California. She also looked forward to having all of her books in one place for the first time. Nuttall wrote, "I think the plan to establish myself here, in the land of my investigations, is a wise one from every point of view."[19]

[19] Letters from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 20 September 1900; 27 May 1902; 4 July 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University. Nuttall often emphasized the personal relationship between her family and Putnum and described herself as Putnum's scientific goddaughter. Putnum allowed Nuttall to store her wardrobe at the Peabody, thereby demonstrating that the museum extended Nuttall remarkable privileges.

PART III: ZELIA NUTTALL AT WORK

This section will discuss Zelia Nuttall's efforts to publish her scholarly work on Mexican manuscripts as well as reproductions of codices discovered in the archives. In her struggle to bring these documents to publication, Nuttall crafted a close relationship with the Peabody Museum that allowed her to work with Frederic Ward Putnum and his staff on publications about the Aztec Calendar Stone, the *Codex Nuttall,* and the *Florentine Codex*. In the course of this work, Nuttall became aware that there were numerous forgeries of codices circulating among scholars and libraries. While trying to identify and discredit these forged pieces, she also acquired and established the authenticity of original codices that she sent to Frederic Ward Putnum and Phoebe Hearst for safekeeping in their museums. This section also shows that Nuttall's professional relationships with other scholars often hinged on her being properly credited for the work she had done with codices. For example, in 1902, Nuttall had been the first to display the *Codex Tejupam*, but she broke with Mexican scholars when this codex was subsequently published under another name, minimizing her own role in its discovery.

A LIFE IN THE ARCHIVES

Of the remaining pre-Columbian manuscripts from Mexico, estimated to be fewer than fifteen in the entire world, only the document known as the *Codex Grolier*, named after the book collector Jean Grolier, is housed in Mexico City. The others are in European archives, where they were placed after being received as diplomatic gifts. The surviving Mexican codices were of two types: either they were pre-Columbian books that were sent to Europe as gifts from the Spaniards, or they were colonial documents painted by indigenous scribes and artists trained by Spanish priests to work in the European style. In the intervening years, the documents were mislaid or forgotten in the archives. Throughout the early modern and modern periods European and Mexican archives were not well organized or cataloged systematically, and often the caretakers would lose sight of the valuable items that they had. Occasionally, there were no caretakers, and items disappeared from unprotected archives. Furthermore, people who had access to archives often pilfered them, and documents would enter into private collections.

Scholars such as Zelia Nuttall sought manuscripts from Mexico and often had to trace their locations through word of mouth. After documents were brought to light again, they often received new titles. Formerly, they were named in honor of the people that had first received them, and in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, they were named in honor of the people who studied and published the documents or given names derived from the archives that held them.[20] At this time, the role of the Mexican documents changed. Once they had been considered gifts or legal documents, whereas they now became objects of study that would provide a window into life in the pre-Colombian and colonial eras. Scholars used these documents for new interpretations informed by emerging academic fields, such as anthropology and history. In doing so, they increased the pressure on archives to organize and professionalize to keep pace with the needs of these emerging scholarly disciplines, although most archives were slow to evolve and adapt to these changing demands.

Freed from her marriage, Nuttall embarked on a career that would find her digging through both archives and archaeological fields. In the interest of science, as she often expressed it, Nuttall looked for pre-Columbian and colonial writings and studied them. She went a step further, however, and decided to share the materials through the publication of facsimiles. Some of Nuttall's better-known publications include the *Codex Nuttall* (previously known as the *Zouche Codex*), the *Codex Magliabechiano III*, and several primary sources related to Sir Francis Drake (see Figure 6).[21]

[20] Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez, "Renaming the Mexican Codices," *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 15 (2004), 267.

[21] Zelia Nuttall materials, relating to Sir Francis Drake, circa 1914-1916, Bancroft Library, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search?style=oac4;titlesAZ=z;idT=UCb112092640.

Figure 6: Illustration of a tongue piercing from the *Codex Magliabechiano*.

Throughout her research and in her work publishing facsimiles, Nuttall was competing with learned and formidable foes from Germany and Mexico. Her colleagues often had more education and greater resources than she possessed. In particular, she often came into conflict over her interpretations and was in financial competition with the Prussian linguist Edward Seler and his patron, the French industrialist-turned-philanthropist Joseph duc de Loubat. This competition engaged Nuttall and Seler in a lifelong debate about Aztec feather working and the purpose of particular military weapons.[22]

PEABODY MUSEUM

Many of Nuttall's scholarly publications were both commissioned and printed by the Peabody Museum. From 1886 to 1906, Nuttall corresponded with Frederick Ward Putnum, Charles Bowditch, and their staff members about content and proofs. The Peabody was also instrumental in distributing other items on Nuttall's behalf, such as the *Codex Nuttall*. Nuttall tried and failed to convince them to publish other codex facsimiles. Nuttall corresponded with them for years over one particular piece of writing—an original essay on the Aztec Calendar Stone—only to be disappointed when it

[22] Zelia Nuttall, *Standard or Head-dress?: An Historical Essay on a Relic of Ancient Mexico.* Volume 1, no.1. (Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnography -Salem Press, 1888-1904): 1-163.

was ultimately not published. She had hoped that her essay on the Aztec Calendar Stone would be her masterpiece, but after many sets of proofs, which included complex charts and illustrations, the project was abandoned (see Figures 1 and 7). The version remaining in Nuttall's papers at the Peabody Museum demonstrates that the work was far from completion as she had not yet sent her final chapters to Putnum. Despite Nuttall's many successes in publishing, she also suffered many complications and defeats.

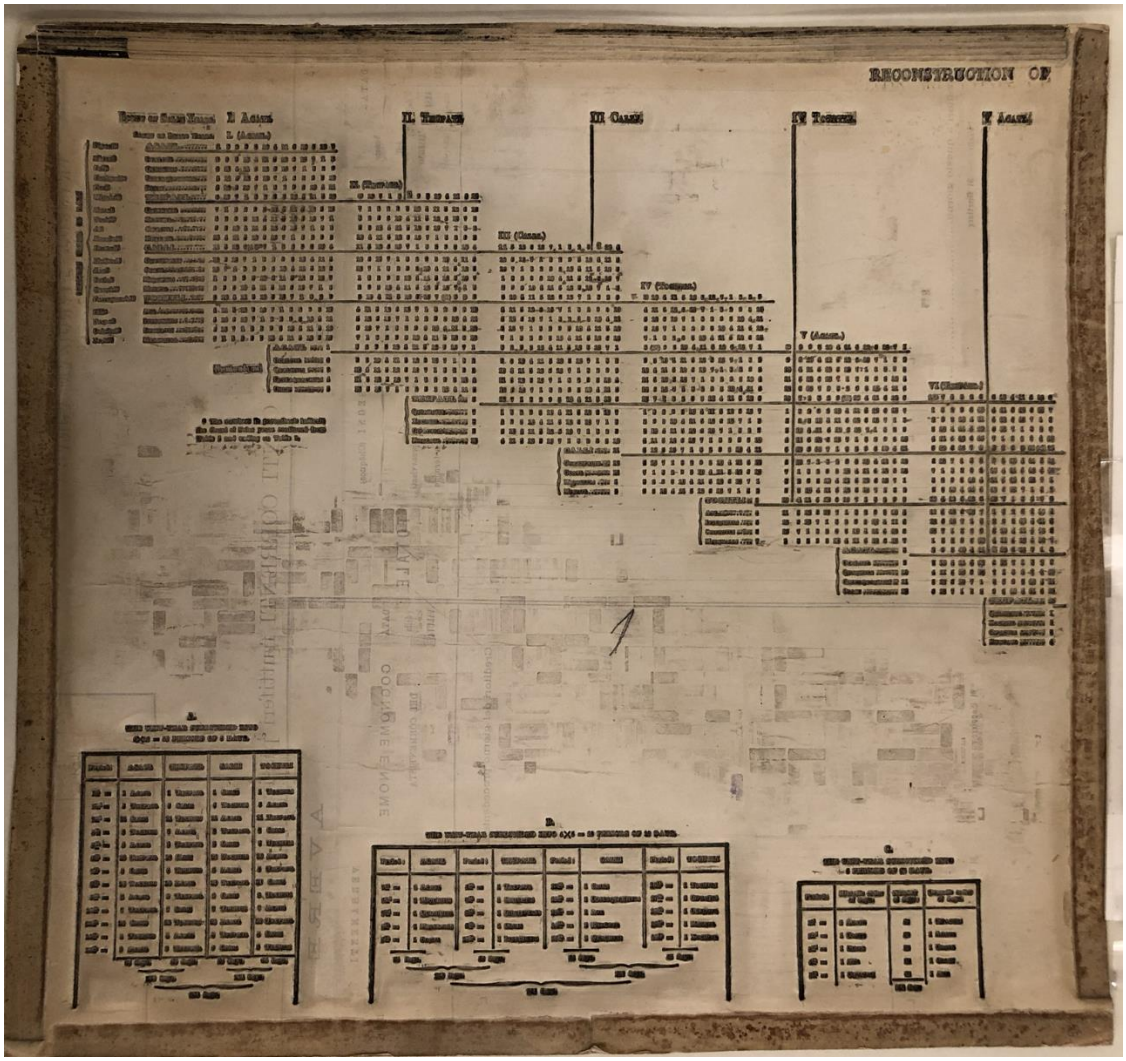

Figure 7: Illustration for Zelia Nuttall's project on the Aztec Calendar Stone which was never published by the Peabody Museum. Courtesy Peabody Museum Archive.

In multiple letters to the staff at the Peabody, Nuttall begged for more time to work on her manuscripts and introductions. Once she received the proofs, she was often distressed by the numerous errors, which included incorrect fonts, spelling mistakes, and repeated references to her as "Miss Nuttall," despite her insistence that she be referred to as "Mrs. Nuttall." In June 1894, Nuttall returned a set of proofs to the Peabody concerning her writing on the Aztec Calendar Stone. She was dismayed that the proofs were a mess, and the printers had even printed her last letter of corrections, thus demonstrating that they were not paying attention to what they were printing. "But oh! I fear that you think that my paper is causing you so much trouble. I am so sorry that there is so little money for the printing of it." At this point, Nuttall was suffering financial difficulties, and she was unable to pay for the reprinting.[23] Nuttall continued to send instructions on issues such as paper and appearance. In October 1901, she advised on what the appearance of the book's spine should be.[24] In distress, Nuttall wrote to Putnam's assistant in 1903 to stop printing the essay because there were too many errors in the proofs.[25] Corresponding over proofs took a dreadful amount of time, and it was nearly a decade before Nuttall finally stopped hoping that her work on the Aztec Calendar Stone would be printed by the Peabody Museum.

CODEX NUTTALL

Nuttall had ambitions to find and publish all of the pre-Columbian and colonial codices that could be found in both European and Mexican archives. The methods that she used to discover them were many. She heard about codices by word of mouth through talking with scholars, church officials, archivists, and curators in Mexico, Germany, Spain, Italy, and England. She looked at published catalogs from archives and museums and, most importantly, she browsed through the archives. Was it unusual for those who guarded the archives to allow a scholar access to the archives? This chiefly depended on personal connections and social status rather than on academic credentials; scholars within

[23] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 5 June 1894. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[24] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 12 October 1901. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[25] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Miss Mead (Francis Harvey Teobert Mead), 23 October 1903. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

certain social circles were commonly allowed in. Nuttall's family connections in Mexico helped in this situation. Nuttall was regarded both as a Mexican and as someone who wielded the authority of someone from the United States. Furthermore, the professionalization of archives trailed decades behind the professionalization of anthropology and history as academic fields. As Miruna Achim has shown, many individuals from around the world rifled through the Mexican archives with little supervision and few consequences for absconding with what they found.[26] As a result, thousands of documents from the Mexican archives are currently housed in special collections libraries and private collections across Europe and the United States.

Figure 8: The Newberry Library's copy of the accordion fold edition of the *Codex Nuttall: Facsimile of an Ancient Mexican Codex Belonging to Lord Zouche of Harynworth England* is one of 300 copies. Photograph by author.

[26] Miruna Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity: Forging the National Museum of Mexico*. (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2017), chapter 2.

In 1899, Nuttall encountered the piece that would define her career, the *Codex San Marco*, later to be known as the *Codex Zouche*, and still later still to be known as the *Zelia Nuttall, Codex Nuttall: facsimile of an ancient Mexican codex belonging to Lord Zouche of Harynworth, England*—or the *Codex Nuttall.* Nuttall had been told about the document by a family friend, an Italian priest who had seen it in around 1869 in an Italian archive. However, Nuttall was not able to locate the codex in any of the archives that she was sporadically working with in Italy in the late 1890s.[27] She eventually found it by keeping her ear attuned to gossip about the black market, through which she learned that the codex had been secretly sold from a Dominican archive in Italy, despite the fact that Italian policies ostensibly forbade the selling of such documents out of archives to private individuals. The codex was sold to an anonymous English collector, John Temple Leader, who then gave it as a gift to Lord Zouche, Robert Curzon, in England. Upon Zouche's death, his son, Sir Robert Curzon, loaned the document to the British Museum in 1876; he eventually donated it officially in 1917.

Nuttall, conveniently, happened to be friends with Edward Thompson, the curator in care of the piece, and she was able to persuade him to allow her to work closely with it throughout 1899. It is important to emphasize that Nuttall's ability to trace the provenance of this document and gain access to it for scholarly purposes depended on her access to a largely informal network of friendships, confidential conversations, gossip, and quasi-legal dealings. Nuttall was uniquely positioned to move between a world of amateur collectors and antiquarian enthusiasts, on the one hand, and academic institutions, museums, and professional scholars on the other. In a moment of increasing professionalization and transition for both archives and pre-Columbian and colonial scholarship, Nuttall and her work served as an important bridge.

While Nuttall was in London examining the codex, Charles Bowditch from the Peabody Museum was also there, and he had an opportunity to visit Nuttall while she was working on the codex. This viewing ignited Bowditch's desire to have the document

[27] Zelia Nuttall, *The Book of the Life of the Ancient Mexicans, Containing an account of their Rites and Superstitions: an anonymous Hispano-Mexican Manuscript preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale*. (Berkeley: University of California, 1903) preface, iii.

published as a facsimile, and he suggested that the *Codex Zouche*, as it was then known, should be renamed after Zelia Nuttall on publication.[28] This act of renaming the codex after a scholar, rather than after a collector or patron, can be seen as indicative of the recontextualization of these manuscripts as objects of scholarly attention. Nuttall knew, however, that it could potentially be controversial to alter the name of the document and that the new Lord Zouche might well not be in favor of this. However, when asked whether he objected to renaming the codex after Nuttall, Zouche willingly gave his consent. Nuttall was relieved that Zouche seemed not to mind that the book was being renamed after her, but others apparently objected; in one of her letters, Nuttall told Putnum that a certain "Mr. Read" was opposed to the idea, but she dismissed him as "not very bright."[29]

In August 1899, Nuttall wrote to Bowditch that she had acquired all of the necessary guarantees to reproduce the *Zouche*—soon to be *Nuttall—Codex*. Nuttall, Bowditch, and the director of the British Museum would all need to approve the final proofs.[30] Nuttall, however, took the lead in supervising the reproduction, and she lavished an enormous attention on every detail of the printing. If Bowditch and the Peabody had any objections to the colored reproductions being produced by the British Museum, for example, Nuttall would go to London herself to make certain that any issues were resolved. As her letters make clear, Nuttall felt personally responsible for any errors that might emerge, and she labored over the preface that she wrote for the book. [31] Three hundred copies were printed and bound in a style that mimicked the accordion fold of the pre-Colombian book see (figure 8).

Another 500 copies were printed and bound as a more traditional European book. Nuttall compiled a list with more than 100 names of individuals who were to receive complimentary copies of the book. She hoped to carry copies with her when she went to

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[28] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 727.

[29] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 27 May 1902. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

[30] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 5 August 1899. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

[31] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 5 August 1899; 1902 (no other date given). Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

Mexico in January 1902 but delays in the printing meant that she was unable to obtain any copies before she embarked on the trip.[32] She appealed for copies from Mexico as well. She had met the prominent archaeologists Marshall Saville and Alfred Maudslay in Oaxaca and wanted to give copies to them.[33] This speaks to the fact that social relationships, established and maintained, for example, through the exchange of such gifts, remained an important element of Nuttall's scholarly activities.

In late February 1902, Nuttall was visiting with Saville in Oaxaca when they encountered Leopoldo Batres, the Mexican Inspector General and Conservator of Archaeological Monuments. Batres was a cantankerous fellow who did not get along with most of the archaeologists working in Mexico, regardless of their national origin. Most scholars questioned his authority because his only qualification to be the national archaeologist was that he had been an antiquities dealer.[34] Batres did not hesitate to indicate that he had expected Nuttall to send a presentation copy of her facsimile of the *Codex Nuttall* and was disappointed not to have received such a gift. This expectation illustrates that scholars and archaeologists used their publications as a form of diplomatic and political currency. It was expected, as a diplomatic courtesy, that Nuttall would send Batres, as the Mexican government official most directly responsible for safeguarding the nation's archaeological heritage, a copy of her reproduction of a Mexican book. Nuttall had sent copies of her earlier essays to Batres; in this case, however, she did not send him a copy because, in the intervening time, she had developed a strong dislike for him. Nuttall had met with Marshall Saville on 16 February 1902, just one month before meeting Batres again, and it is most likely that Saville had told Nuttall all about his many troubles with Batres. Batres had allowed Saville to explore and dig at Palenque but had also inserted himself into the excavation; his interference soon made it too difficult for Saville to achieve anything. Saville had finally left Mexico without completing the excavation and was never able to work with Batres

[32] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 11 January 1902. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

[33] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 16 Feb 1902. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

[34] Henry Baerlein, *Mexico, the Land of Unrest; Being Chiefly an Account of What Produced the Outbreak in 1910, Together with the Story of the Revolutions Down to This Day* (London: Herbert and Daniel, 1913), 106.

again.[35] Having heard these stories from Saville, Nuttall bristled when Batres demanded a copy of her book. She resented it even more when Batres went farther and threatened the Peabody Museum. Nuttall reported to Frederick Ward Putnum that Batres had told her to inform Putnum that the Peabody needed to send four copies of the book to Batres for him to deliver to various ministries and libraries. Nuttall warned Putnum that Batres had insisted that "if you did not send him one, then he would not be good to your museum!"[36]

Courtesy copies may have been politically important, but it seems that no one wanted to purchase a copy of the book, which must have been expensive. Although many copies had been distributed, Nuttall lamented that the Peabody Museum was not successfully convincing libraries to purchase copies. As of September 1902, only nine copies of the book had been sold, and Nuttall claimed that she was "disgusted."[37]

FLORENTINE CODEX

Throughout the turn of the twentieth century, while Nuttall worked on the *Codex Nuttall,* she also attempted to publish a colonial document known as the *Florentine Codex*, known to be in an archive in Florence (see Figure 9). Nuttall was not the only person interested in the document. Francisco Paso y Troncoso, the official director of the National Museum in Mexico, had been in Europe for twenty years studying Mexican documents in European archives. The *Florentine Codex* was one of his important studies. Eduard Seler and his patron, Joseph duc de Loubat, were also interested in studying and publishing the document. Throughout the 1890s, Seler would deliver his thoughts on the *Florentine Codex* at various conferences. In February 1898, Nuttall wrote to Putnum that she was ready to send him some material to print. She wanted to keep her plans quiet because other scholars had repeatedly preempted her attempts to

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[35] Marshall H. Saville, "Bibliographic Notes on Palenque, Chiapas,' *Indian Notes and Monographs*. (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heyes Foundation, 1928), 155-167; Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Miss Mead (Francis Harvey Teobert Mead) at the Peabody Museum, 16 Feb 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[36] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, February 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[37] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 25 September 1902. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

publish other materials. Drawing Putnum intimately into her conspiracy to be the first to publish the *Florentine Codex*, Nuttall signed the letter as his "grateful god-daughter."[38] This relationship seems to be self-assigned, as Nuttall often referred to Putnum as her "godfather in science."[39]

Figure 9: Illustration of a bloodletting ceremony from the *Florentine Codex*.
Courtesy Peabody Museum Archive.

Four years later, however, only a small portion of the *Florentine Codex* had been published by the Peabody Museum. Throughout 1902, Nuttall urgently encouraged Putnum to publish the *Florentine Codex* in its entirety. If the Peabody Museum could not do it, she thought that Harvard University Press would do just as well.[40] More importantly, Nuttall claimed that Seler was riling up Loubat to pressure her into allowing them to publish the document. She wrote to Putnum, "Of course it is Seler who is working him up and is making the most of the tangible cause of complaint against me. Dr. Seler is quite wild with envy and disgust at me for not having cited him more in my book as an authority." Nuttall hoped to publish a portion of the *Florentine Codex* before the upcoming Congress of Americanists in New York in 1902 in order to stall any publication that might be forthcoming by Seler and Loubat. Nuttall claimed that Seler

[38] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 13 February 1898, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[39] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 11 February 1897, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[40] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 4 July 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

and Loubat, "will seize every chance to attack me and are doing so—but I do not care and am quietly preparing a defensive missile that will settle both at once. I am biding my time. Of course the Florentine C. must be out in time for the congress and then Loubat will calm down!"[41]

In this, Nuttall was destined to be disappointed. Despite the fact that the Peabody had brought out a small piece on the *Florentine Codex* in 1901, they failed to follow through with other publications and certainly did not produce anything before the congress, despite the fact that Nuttall had told them that a third of the material was ready for publication as early as August 1902.[42] Nuttall considered the book fully ready for production in November 1902. [43]

Nuttall knew that there would be a Mexican delegation at the congress and hoped that incoming politicians would renegotiate Saville's agreement to excavate in Mexico. This would mean side-stepping Batres. If this were possible, she might be able to publish or travel to New York with yet another codex and a lienzo, a painting on cloth, that she claimed to have found.[44]

Unfortunately, for the most part, the correspondence between Nuttall and the Peabody scholars is one-sided and provides only her side of the negotiations, and we do not know the reason for the delay in publishing Nuttall's edition of the *Florentine Codex*. Another eight months went by, but Nuttall persisted, writing to Putnum in July of 1903 that she wanted to see a facsimile of the *Florentine Codex* come out immediately.[45] Again, nothing was forthcoming. The following September, Nuttall reported to Putnum that Eduard Seler and Joseph duc de Loubat had applied to the Italian government for

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[41] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 27 May 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers. Peabody Museum Archives, Harvard University.

[42] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 13 August 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[43] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 30 October 1902; 13 November 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[44] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 27 May 1902. Peabody Museum Archives, Zelia Nuttall Papers. Harvard University.

[45] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 30 October 1902; 13 November 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

permission to publish the *Florentine Codex* but, much to her delight, their application had been rejected.[46] Encouraged by Seler's failure, Nuttall then selected Italian paper for the production and sent it to Putnum one month later, in October 1903. Nuttall told Putnum's assistant, Francis Mead, that she would be sending the preface, and she wanted part I of the *Florentine Codex* published immediately. In January 1904, confident that the book would soon be out, she was feeling generous and granted Seler permission to publish images from it. Meanwhile, Nuttall was trying to convince a particular bookbinder to lower his prices.[47]

Despite Nuttall's urgency and the extraordinary lengths to which she went, the Peabody continued to delay and finally abandoned the project entirely, never publishing her work. Had Nuttall been able to publish the manuscript on the *Florentine Codex*, her own standing in the world of Mesoamerican studies may have been more authoritative and prestigious. Instead, because she had kept her work on the codex largely private throughout this period, it was Eduard Seler—who freely shared his interpretations of the work at various conferences—whose name and reputation became most closely associated with the *Florentine Codex*. Nuttall's work on the codex fell into obscurity. Her papers at the Peabody do not contain even her preface for the book.

This series of failed publications may also have been indicative of the gradually worsening relationship between Nuttall and the Peabody Museum. It was around this time that the support that Putnam and the Peabody had been providing to amateurs in the field began to weaken as the museum deepened its relationship with those studying anthropology at Harvard, such as the emerging anthropologist Alfred Tozzer.[48]

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[46] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 10 September 1903, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[47] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 19 January 1904, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University. David L. Browman and Stephen Williams, *Anthropology at Harvard: A Biographical History, 1790-1940* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum Press, 2013), 100.

[48] David L. Browman and Stephen Williams, *Anthropology at Harvard: A Biographical History, 1790-1940* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum Press, 2013), 243.

FORGERIES

In the period that Zelia Nuttall was both publishing manuscripts and excavating artifacts, issues of ownership and authenticity were increasing in importance for scholars, museums, and the Mexican government. W. H. Holmes, from the Smithsonian, warned that falsified artifacts imported from Mexico were common, and they were often forged well enough that many experts could not tell the difference.[49] Forgeries grew more marketable, and Nuttall worried about being stung, as many of her family and friends had. In 1879, Nuttall's future husband, Alphonse Pinart, had purchased paintings on skin that were forgeries of pre-Colombian documents. Even a noted scholar such as Alfredo Chavero could be taken in. In the *Collecion Chavero*, he had reproduced parts of several codices that Eduard Seler, after comparing them with documents in the archives in Berlin, had discovered to be forgeries.[50] In early 1906, shortly before Chavero's death, Nuttall visited the scholar at home and found him examining a codex that had been offered to her for purchase several months earlier. Nuttall had decided not to purchase the manuscript because she suspected it to be fraudulent. Chavero told Nuttall that it had been brought to him from the Yucatan, but Nuttall surmised that it had been created by the artist and suspected forger Genaro López, who had shown it to her.[51] López had a dubious reputation as an alcoholic and reportedly worked sketching imaginary pre-Columbian murals for Leopoldo Batres.[52] Nuttall knew that Chavero occasionally purchased forgeries with the intent to study them, but when he passed away in 1906, his family sold his library without distinguishing between historic materials and forgeries. The remaining Chavero family members also stopped talking to Nuttall, which left her with little knowledge about the dispersal of his library.[53] The result was that the family sold the library through Weetman Pearson of London, and Nuttall was not able to acquire any of the legitimate codices held by Chavero.[54]

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[49] William Henry Holmes, "The Trade in Spurious Mexican Antiquities," *Science* 7, no. 159 (19 Feb 1886): 170–172.

[50] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 689.

[51] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 699-700.

[52] A copy of Nuttall's Letter to Putnum is in Parmenter's notes, Ross Parmenter Papers, Box: Nuttall, Folder: Trafficking, "Chavero's Fraudulent Codice," 23 April 1974.

[53] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 543, 742.

[54] Parmenter, "Zelia," 543.

Nuttall regarded herself as an expert on authentic and forged documents that represented pre-Colombian writing. Around 1900, Nuttall had acquired an anonymous manuscript that she described to Phoebe Hearst and Frederick Ward Putnum. In this case, she was convinced of the document's authenticity, and she wanted an American museum to take it and preserve it. Nuttall cited several elements that convinced her of its authenticity. First, the leatherworking and aging of the leather were inimitable. She also saw that the native draughtsmanship was so precise that it could not be copied by modern artists. Nuttall believed that the seventeenth century script found on the document was too antiquated to be imitated, that the pigments could not be replicated with contemporary materials, and that only a person, such as herself, who had years of familiarity with such documents could even attempt a reproduction. She knew of no one with the necessary skill to create a convincing forgery and asserted that Genaro López, the best-known forger of such documents, certainly did not possess skills of sufficient quality.[55] Nuttall explicitly told Bowditch that López had been taken by Paso y Troncoso to Europe to help with sketching images from codices but had been dismissed when his forgeries became known back in Mexico.[56]

When Nuttall acquired this codex, she also purchased another lienzo that she strongly felt was authentic; both, she thought, belonged at the National Museum in the United States. She justified this in a letter to W. H. Holmes in 1905:

> I have always felt that the lienzo (of which I sent you a photographic reproduction of the whole and life-size photographic reproduction of a portion, showing finesses of texture, etc.) should remain together [with the codex] as they come from the same place and had obviously been preserved together…Knowing that there are no such specimens in the whole of the United States I have wished they should be there—although I am placing myself in a delicate position toward the Mexican government by sending them both out of this country. The National Museum is certainly the place of all places where I would rather have the codex and lienzo preserved, and I sincerely hope that the first can be purchased by the government. It has been valued at $1500, U.S. currency, and this is the sum I would like to have for it—payable in an installment of $500.00 at first and one or two installments within six month.[57]

[55] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 730.
[56] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 730.
[57] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 731.

Nuttall also stressed to Putnum and Bowditch that she was unsure of the legality of taking a codex out of Mexico. Earlier antiquities laws had focused on material artifacts such as sculptures and precious metals and had not specifically addressed manuscripts. New antiquities laws, however, did cover codices, although the status of such documents remained somewhat ambiguous. Whoever did purchase the document, Nuttall stressed, would need to be quiet about it for a while.

> It will, indeed, be necessary to keep it a profound secret that I have had anything to do with them. As long as I live here, it is necessary to protect myself. I have thought that the lienzo might be exhibited at the Museum as a "loan" from a person who did not want his or her name known—so as to give it no clue.
>
> If the Codex is bought, I pledge myself to do all in my power to obtain for the National Museum the loan and subsequent gift of the lienzo. The condition I must insist on is that as long as I find necessary (on account of my residence and interest here) my name is not to be publicly associated with the Codex and lienzo,--that the utmost discretion and reserve be observed in communicating the circumstances of their acquisition. You will readily understand the difficult position I am in and will, I am sure do all you can to protect your country-woman and colleague.[58]

W. H. Holmes responded that he required more information about provenance before he would consider purchasing the codex from Nuttall. Nuttall then loaned it to a friend, and it seems to have been lost.[59] It is an unfortunate irony that, after going to extraordinary lengths in her attempts to preserve the document, Nuttall essentially lost it herself. The document was lost not only to Nuttall but to the Mexican nation as well. This sort of danger was inherent, however, in the quasi-legal and secretive circulation of such documents that was prevalent during this period. The professionalization of archives, archaeology, and anthropology was evolving; the legal status of such manuscripts remained ambiguous; and documents of uncertain authenticity, with dubious provenance, were entering both the marketplace and scholarly discourse. Nuttall was poised between both of these worlds.

ANOTHER LOST CODEX

Despite the loss of this codex, Nuttall continued to encourage Putnum to purchase documents from her. She contacted Putnum about purchasing various manuscripts in

[58] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 731.

[59] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 730-1. Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz and Ruth Solis Vicarte, *Antecedentes de las leyes sobre monumentos históricos*, 1536–1910 (México, DF: INHA, 1988), 66–68.

1902, 1904, and 1905. In 1902, she claimed she had a new document for Putnum.[60] Writing to him again in 1904, she claimed to have found another codex in the style of the *Nuttall* and *Vienna* codices. She sought Putnum's advice. Should she offer the document to the Smithsonian or the Peabody? Perhaps the Hearst family in California would purchase the material for the University of California? She asked Putnum not to mention this codex to anyone in the United States because she did not want competition from other scholars in interpreting it. Nuttall also requested that he not tell anyone in Mexico either. It was likely that she would not manage to get the documents out of Mexico, she said, if Mexican government officials, such as Leopoldo Batres, knew about it. Unfortunately for Nuttall, Putnum and his colleague Charles P. Bowditch declined to purchase the document. [61]

In the autumn of 1905, Nuttall purchased yet another codex, which she called *Codex No. 11*. She offered it to Putnum in the hope that the Peabody Museum would publish it, despite the fact that the museum had not published the five other codices that she had offered to them, and Bowditch had already turned Nuttall down. She tried to entice Putnum, however, by promising that the fourteen pages were in a style similar to that of the *Codex Nuttall* and that she thought that she knew the provenance. She had purchased the item herself because no one involved with the University of California would supply the funds. This purchase put Nuttall at a financial disadvantage, and she was once again seeking $1500.00 for the codex. Nuttall wanted Putnum to purchase the item and in addition wanted him to keep the document in a secure and secret place at the Peabody Museum.[62] Putnum did not publish the document, but he did hold it for her, for at least fourteen months, before handing it over to the American anthropologist Alice Fletcher, who was supposed to look for a buyer.[63] This codex, too, was somehow lost and never recovered.

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[60] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 27 May 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[61] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 28 October 1904, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[62] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 696-697.

[63] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 728-729.

Figure 10: Zelia Nuttall's sketches of figurines from various codices.
Courtesy Peabody Museum Archive.

CODEX SIERRA

Nuttall had exhibited the *Codex Tejupam* in 1902 at the New York Congress of Americanists. She had found funding and was planning to publish the document, which she had found in the Mexican National Museum's archive, shortly after the congress. However, as soon as her close friend Nicolas León, a professor at the National Museum, learned that the codex was back in the archives in Mexico City, he sent an artist to copy it and then published it with the government agency—the Oficina Impresora del Timbre—without notifying Nuttall (see Figure 11). León named the publication after the Minister of Public Instruction, Justo Sierra, and although the publication did not include the full document or the text, it became known as the *Codex Sierra*.

Figure 11: *Codex Sierra.*
Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Codex_Sierra_8.jpg

This action facilitated the end of Leon's working relationship with Nuttall. Earlier that same year, they had been friends. Leon had helped Nuttall to improve her relationship with Powell Foulk Clayton, the new ambassador from the United States to Mexico. Despite her letters of introduction from Phoebe Hearst to President Diaz and his wife, Clayton did not know much about the Peabody Museum and did not take Nuttall's position as a representative of the Peabody Museum in Mexico seriously.[64] This was the type of challenge that Nuttall repeatedly faced as an independent scholar; however,

[64] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 8 February 1902. Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

León intervened on her behalf by informing the ambassador of her scholarly stature. Unfortunately, León subsequently ruined his relationship with Nuttall by neglecting to credit her for her role in bringing the *Codex Sierra* to the public eye and, more specifically, for bringing it directly to León's own attention. Nuttall felt such slights deeply and often ended professional relationships over disagreements of this sort.

In 1926, Phillip Ainsworth characterized Nuttall as a personality that did not shy away from confrontation:

> Mrs. Nuttall could, and did, fight-hard and well. Many a cocksure person who differed with her on scientific questions received a sound drubbing for his pains, her weapons being the bludgeon of authentic fact and the rapier of valid argument. When I was with her, in 1925-1926, "Aunt Zelia "- as I was privileged to call her-was having a terrific battle with someone or other about some moot point which I forget. One day she came out into the garden where I was sitting and, triumphantly brandishing a letter, cried: "Well, I've finished him quite. He admits that he was -wrong!"[65]

Worse yet, in his introduction to the codex, León claimed that it was by following notes made by the National Museum's director, Francisco Paso y Troncoso, that he had found the codex, thus giving credit for Nuttall's discovery to Troncoso. Justo Sierra, in having allocated the funding for the publication of the codex, also became a person that Nuttall no longer trusted; she would later speak out against him.[66]

Zelia Nuttall's deep interest in studying codices and in publishing her own scholarly work on them, however, was only one facet of what she conceived as her overriding project to advance an understanding of the history of humanity. In the following section, I will explore how Nuttall's work with manuscripts intersected with her deep and multifaceted involvement in the emerging scholarly discipline of anthropology.

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[65] Philip Ainsworth, "Zelia Nuttall: An Appreciation." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Nov. 1933), 488.

[66] Parmenter, *"*Zelia*,"* 622. Zelia Nuttall, "Island of Sacrificios," *American Anthropologist* 12 (1910). Note 1, 280.

PART IV: ANTHROPOLOGY

Zelia Nuttall's many projects were often intertwined, and she frequently found herself working simultaneously on archaeological digs, analysis of manuscripts, fund raising, publication, and curatorial work. For Nuttall, these diverse activities were each aspects of a single pursuit, which increasingly began to coalesce under the rubric of anthropology. Among her many other contributions, Nuttall was also closely involved in the struggle to professionalize this rapidly evolving scholarly discipline. This section will look at how Nuttall's efforts to professionalize the field of anthropology operated in tandem with her commitment to uncovering codices and publishing facsimiles.

While Nuttall struggled with her numerous publications, she was also helping to establish what would become the Department of Anthropology at the University of California.[67] She worked closely with Phoebe Hearst to collect pieces—not only from Mexico but also from Russia—for the University's future museum of anthropology. Nuttall often looked to Hearst for financial assistance to obtain codices.

Interestingly, Nuttall's residence in Mexico became crucial to the role that she would play in the development of anthropology. One advantage to living in Mexico was that it allowed Nuttall to pursue her research in local archives and led her to translate and publish important documents pertaining to Francis Drake's expedition to New Spain, which she uncovered in the national archive. This archival research, in turn, led to Nuttall's excavation on the Island of Sacrifices, where Drake had landed around 1518.[68] It was her work on this island that would engage her directly in a heated and protracted debate about methodological standards with Mexico's head archaeologist, Leopoldo Batres. Finally, it was Nuttall's presence in Mexico that enabled her to assist a Mexican student, Manuel Gamio, to obtain a scholarship to Columbia University. There, Gamio

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[67] Bancroft Library, "Foundations of Anthropology at the University of California, Founders and Their Visions, Zelia Maria Magdalena Nuttall. (1857-1933)." http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/Exhibits/anthro/3founders2_nuttall.html. Last accessed 8 April 2019.

[68] Letter to Franz Boas from Zelia Nuttall, 28 Jan 1910. Reproduced in Ross Parmenter, "Glimpses of a Friendship," *Pioneers of American Anthropology: The Uses of Biography,* June Helm, ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 122.

would become the first Mexican scholar to study with Franz Boas. On returning to Mexico, Gamio would ultimately become the nation's foremost anthropologist, taking Batres's place as the national archaeologist and professionalizing the discipline of anthropology in Mexico.

CALIFORNIA

Zelia Nuttall met Phoebe Hearst, the mother of the businessman William Randolph Hearst, in the early 1880s through social circles in San Francisco. Phoebe Hearst (1842-1919) had once been a schoolteacher, and one aspect of her philanthropy included collecting 60,000 pieces from cultures around the world for the museum that now bears her name.[69] Nuttall traveled to Russia in 1896 on a collecting mission for Hearst and shared her passion for erudition.[70] The women became close friends despite the fact that Hearst was Nuttall's senior by twenty years. Hearst loaned Nuttall the funding to purchase her home in Mexico.

Phoebe Hearst was building a new university in California, which would become the University of California. As a California native, Nuttall was swept away by the project, and she contributed to the university by collecting for the university museum that Phoebe Hearst planned to build. However, construction of that museum would be delayed for at least a decade. Nuttall continued to offer artifacts and manuscripts to Hearst throughout this period, but Hearst was seldom ready to purchase them, which left Nuttall financially frustrated.

In 1893, Phoebe Hearst bought a pre-Columbian manuscript from Nuttall for the collections of the future museum.[71] Over the years, Hearst purchased enough material from Nuttall that Nuttall considered Phoebe Hearst to be her third best client, after the Peabody and Smithsonian museums.

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[69] Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, "Our Founder: Phoebe Apperson Hearst," https://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/phoebe-heast/, accessed 15 March 2019.

[70] Alex Pezzati, "A Crowning Achievement: Zelia Nuttall in Czarist Russia," Penn Museum, Volume 42, Issue 2, 2000. https://www.penn.museum/sites/expedition/a-crowning-achievement-zelia-nuttall-in-czarist-russia/, accessed 16 March 2019.

[71] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 11 December 1893, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

Nevertheless, Nuttall offered many more manuscripts and artifacts to Phoebe Hearst than she was willing to purchase. Many of the artifacts that Nuttall recovered were found on excavations for which she requested funding from Phoebe Hearst. However, over time, Hearst seems to have grown increasingly reluctant to fund excavations before getting her museum fully established.

In 1901, Nuttall wrote to Putnum about her incipient plans to start a museum of anthropology in San Francisco. She entertained an idea put forward by the Joseph duc de Loubat, who said that he would fund a professorship for her at the University of California. She believed that with a professorial title she could solicit public donations to start a separate city museum for the study of archaeology and ethnology that was not a part of the university. Nuttall firmly believed that the city museum's director should be a professor of archaeology in order to establish a level of professionalism. However, if her friends insisted, she would be the interim director while a search was conducted for the official director. "Would it be wrong for me to start a small separate museum of Mexico and Central America only, which could later be incorporated into a larger museum? It would indeed be a comfort if I could talk the matter over with you. If to please my friends I were made director, it would be with a nominal title."[72]

Nuttall said that she would be willing to retire from the director position when a more qualified person came along. She implied that many of her wealthy friends in California, such as the William Crocker family, were willing to give money if she were to be the director.[73] They would be willing to continue the funding after she retired from the city museum but, as they did not get along with Phoebe Hearst, they would not provide funding for a university museum. Without a higher degree, Nuttall admitted that it would presumptive of her to take the directorship but asked Putnum's advice. "Please

[72] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 14 October 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[73] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 28 July 1903, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

tell me what to do to advance the cause of 'beloved science' to the utmost extent. As you see I am in a perplexed condition."[74]

The question was how to establish a new museum. Could Nuttall use a small museum to leverage the funding for a larger museum, which would absorb the smaller museum and its library? Should she concentrate her attention on building a museum at the University of California, or should she confine her attention to a separate small museum? Could she leverage funding from the Hearst and Crocker families? Or should she forget about funding from Hearst?

As it happened, Mrs. William Crocker was headed to New York, and Nuttall hoped that Putnum, Franz Boas, and Marshall Saville would all meet with her. Nuttall would of course send along letters of introduction. She told Putnum confidentially that the Crocker family had enough money to fund the museum that Nuttall was planning and, moreover, that they would help to build public subscriptions, but only if Phoebe Hearst was not involved in the founding. However, Phoebe Hearst would be allowed to make donations if she desired. Nuttall cautioned Putnum not to mention Hearst's name to Crocker. "You have no idea of the complexity of the inner workings of matters here—feelings against Hearst run so high that people are blinded to fact that he [William Randolph Hearst] would have nothing to do with his angelic mother's noble deeds."[75]

Putnum must have admonished Nuttall for these complex machinations because, in her next letter to him, she claimed that Putnum had misunderstood her. She was not betraying "Mother Hearst." The Californians needed to be nudged, yet one could not tell them what to do. She told Putnum that the situation was so complicated that he, as an outsider, could not understand.[76]

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[74] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 14 October 1902, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[75] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 30 October 1901, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

[76] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Frederick Ward Putnum, 25 November 1901, Zelia Nuttall Papers, Peabody Museum Archive, Harvard University.

As the decade moved forward, Nuttall did not succeed in opening her own museum, and she retreated to her house in Mexico. However, she continued to request funding from Phoebe Hearst. In 1905, Nuttall was hoarding a secret excavation site and was looking for funding to work at it.[77] Perhaps she was keeping it secret because she did not want Leopoldo Batres to be involved in the excavation. She appealed to the Peabody Museum and the Smithsonian for funds for an excavation and a publication about it, but she was denied by both. Nuttall turned to Hearst, but she had still not established her museum and was not yet prepared to dedicate a portion of the developing museum or library to artifacts from Mexico.[78] Nuttall's influence with museums in the United States was waning, but her relationship with institutions in Mexico was growing stronger.

ARCHIVO GENERAL DE LA NACIÓN

Despite the failure of her museum project, Zelia Nuttall's interest in archival research continued to deepen. In the spring of 1907, she applied for permission to research in the Archivo General de la Nación. She contacted Ignacio Mariscal, a family friend, to request access; a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, he still had some influence in the archives. Perhaps more importantly, Mariscal was friendly with upper-class foreigners in Nuttall's social circle, and he was able to obtain free access for Nuttall to browse the archives.[79]

A trolley ran from the front of Nuttall's house to the main zócalo, and from there she could easily walk to the National Palace where the national museum and archive were located. Despite the convenience of this trolley, this trip must have taken about an hour each way, as the trolley had to travel nearly fourteen kilometers (see figure 12). Visiting the archive became Nuttall's routine throughout that spring and summer.

[77] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 726-727.
[78] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 727-729.
[79] Parmenter, *"Zelia,"* 733.

Figure 12: Postcard bearing the image of the tram station
that Zelia Nuttall used in the zócalo in Mexico City, 1907. From the author's collection.

This research would be very fruitful for Nuttall; soon she began to uncover numerous documents regarding Sir Francis Drake, which she would later publish. Her interest in these documents would also pique her interest in the spot on the Island of Sacrifices, off the Atlantic coast of Veracruz, Mexico, where Sir Francis Drake and other explorers had had landed in the 1500s. Several of Drake's men had described the indigenous architecture on the island, and Nuttall began an excavation on the site in late 1909—only to have it swooped away from her on Easter weekend in 1910 by Leopoldo Batres. He thereafter denied her access to the site and took charge of excavations there himself.[80]

[80] Nuttall, "Island," 280.

These events kicked off a series of academic, government, and newspaper publications in which Nuttall and Batres condemned each other's actions and questioned each other's qualifications.[81] It became clear in this series of articles that Batres saw Nuttall as an amateur and a foreigner with no authority in Mexico. He asked, "Who is Mrs. Nuttall Piñard to judge… What authority do you have?"[82]

MANUEL GAMIO

Driven by her animosity toward Batres, Nuttall was motivated to help Manuel Gamio, a Mexican archaeology student, to acquire the education that would eventually allow him to replace Batres as inspector general. In 1909, Franz Boas, the founder of the department of anthropology at Columbia University, approached Nuttall to help him in contacting the right Mexican official about starting a school of archaeology in Mexico.[83] Boas also asked Nuttall to identify a Mexican student who could potentially attend Columbia and, under his mentorship, acquire a PhD in order to help professionalize Mexican anthropology. Boas well understood the need to professionalize the field of anthropology as he has started as a geologist and physicist himself. Over the years, Boas built the anthropology program at Columbia University and nurtured several notable women scholars along the way. Nuttall identified the Mexican student Manual Gamio, and she suggested him to Boas.[84] She also helped Gamio acquire a scholarship from President Díaz and Justo Sierra, the Minister of Public Instruction, in Mexico.[85] Nuttall

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[81] Zelia Nuttall, "Island of Sacrificios," *American Anthropologist,* Volume 12 (1910); Zelia Nuttall, "Mrs. Nuttall Ready to Prove Her Claim against L. Batres," *Mexican Herald*, 10 Dec 1910; Zelia Nuttall, "Toltec Teapot Tempest," New York Evening Post, 31 Dec 1910. Reprint of Nuttall's open Letter in the *Mexican Herald*, 10 Dec 1910; Nuttall, "Island," Note 1, 280; Leopoldo Batres, *La Isla de Sacrificios: La Señora Nuttall de Piñard y Leopoldo Batres.* (México: Tipografía Económica, 1910).

[82] Leopoldo Batres, *La Isla* de *Sacrificios: La Señora Nuttall* de *Piñard y Leopoldo Batres* (México: Tipografia Economica, 1910), 3-4.

[83] Leopoldo Batres was never invited to participate in the International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology established by Franz Boas and Eduard Seler in Mexico. Most likely this is because Zelia Nuttall explicitly told Boas that he should not invite Batres. Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 3 November 1909, American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers. Richard Godoy, "Franz Boas and his Plans for an International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology in Mexico," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences.* Volume 13 (1977): 234.

[84] Letters to Zelia Nuttall from Franz Boas, 7 October 1909; 17 January 1910; American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers. Letters to Franz Boas from Zelia Nuttall, 27 September 1909; 9 November 1909; 28 January 1910. American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers.

[85] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 3 November 1909, American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers.

explicitly told Boas that Gamio's education must serve the purpose of educating him to replace Batres.

> What I hope most is that you should give him a thorough knowledge of Museum work so that someday soon he can be made the Director of the Archaeological Section of the National Museum here and Inspector of Monuments in the place of Batres. This is of course strictly entre-nous—but I know that the places will be open to him someday and it will be in the interest of science to have him here fully equipped. He should become acquainted with the modern method of work work-also, later on…but I want to [?] to tell you what is needed most here—a thoroughly trained Museum Director and archaeologist acquainted with modern methods. I do hope that he will become both—but perhaps that is asking too much.[86]

Strengthening Nuttall's position in Mexico in 1910, the director of the national museum, Genero García, offered her the position of professor of archaeology in the national museum, which would have included the curatorship of the archaeological artifacts. Nuttall declined to accept the position, citing ill health. However, another reason for her reluctance may have been that, had she taken the position, she may have come into contact with Leopoldo Batres more often, which would likely have led to more conflicts between them. She was certainly opposed to the manner in which Batres had chosen to catalog and organize the indigenous artifacts in the museum. She told Franz Boas that the museum was in a terrible state. "Things at the museum are in a lamentable condition. Can you imagine that the current director has handed the whole archaeological department to Batres? He is in charge at present and has published his opinion that Seler's classification of objects there was 'all wrong' and is at present destroying all Seler's work and re-arranging everything. The result is confusion and chaos imminent."[87] An extensive debate between Nuttall and Batres over the cataloging at the museum continued, and Nuttall went so far as to publish her own system of classification. After Batres fled Mexico in 1911, due to the Mexican Revolution, the professors at the museum chose to redo his organization along the lines suggested by Nuttall.[88]

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[86] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 27 September 1909, American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers. Gamio returned to Mexico to take up Batres's position and did not finish his doctorate until after the Mexican Revolution was over. Zelia Nuttall, "Island of Sacrificios," *American Anthropologist,* Volume 12 (1910). Note 1, 280.

[87] Letter from Zelia Nuttall to Franz Boas, 3 November 1909, American Philosophical Society, Franz Boas Papers. Although Batres was the national archeologist he held no authority over the National Museum.

[88] Nuttall, "Island," 282-284.

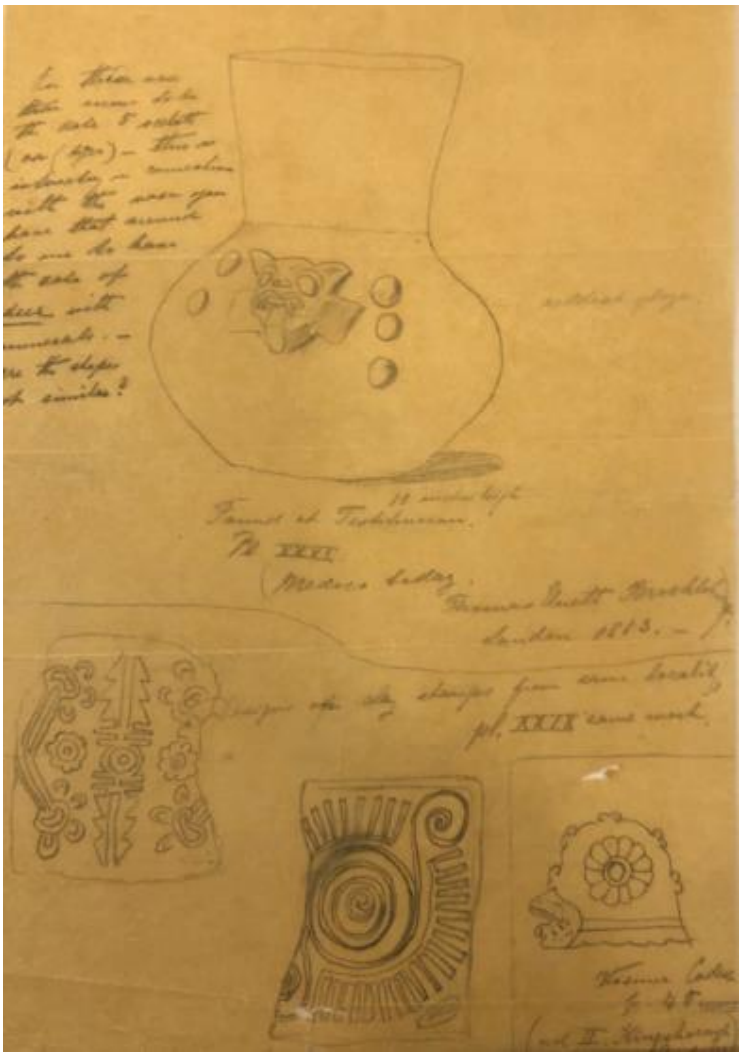

Figure 13: Preparations for illustrations
to be published by the Peabody Museum on behalf of Zelia Nuttall.
Courtesy Peabody Museum Archive.

PART V: CONCLUSION

Zelia Nuttall occupied a place between institutions and nations. As a Mexican American woman who had mastered multiple languages, she was able to travel to foreign libraries and archives and take advantage of her family's connections in Europe and Mexico. Her position as a Mexican American meant that she had familial social connections in Mexico, but it also meant that within Mexico she was perceived as an American. Divorcing from her husband, Alphonse Pinart, gave her the freedom to travel, but it also hampered her. Pinart had spent most of her inherited fortune, and she was forced to manage her income from investments, sales of artifacts, and loans tightly. Nuttall's position as a representative of the Peabody Museum and the University of California without official professorships allowed her scholarly flexibility in her interpretations. However, the accompanying financial instability eventually taxed her health. In addition, by 1910, institutions such as the Peabody shifted their support from amateurs in the field to favor scholars with higher academic degrees in anthropology and archaeology. As Nuttall had helped to train students such as Manuel Gamio, she had inadvertently pushed herself out of the field.

Ultimately, Zelia Nuttall's efforts to publish codices and her struggle to establish archaeological standards served the same purpose. Throughout her work, she sought to learn about the ancient Mexicans because, through deepening an understanding of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, she hoped to contribute to the development of a truly scientific account of the universal history of man. Despite the many setbacks and obstacles that confronted her, that she achieved that ambition is indisputable, and her work and inspiration remain a lasting legacy.

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